

Summary of assessment decision process affecting No Child Left Behind Accountability.

The first step is to determine which standards a student will work in:

- If the IEP team decides the child should work primarily in the general content standards:
 1. The student will participate in all general education assessments with or without accommodations (ex. Dakota Writing and Dakota Step).
 2. Team must choose which accommodations identified on the IEP, if needed, that the child will also use for statewide assessment.
 3. According to the accountability for No Child Left Behind Act 2001, the following will occur for AYP:
 - Student is counted for Participation
 - Student is counted for AYP
- If the IEP team decides the child should work primarily in the South Dakota Extended Content and Alternate Academic Achievement Descriptors for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities and the child meets the significant cognitive disability criteria:
 1. The student will take all alternate assessments (Ex. Alternate Writing and Dakota Step A).
 2. Document reasons for decision on IEP form.
 3. According to the accountability for No Child Left Behind Act 2001, the following will occur for AYP:
 - Student is counted for participation
 - Up to 1% of students scoring proficient on the alternate assessment, in each district, will be counted for AYP as proficient.All score reports will reflect the actual score received

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South Dakota Assessment Programs For Students with Disabilities



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What are the South Dakota Assessments?

Dakota Step: Assessment for accountability used to measure student proficiency and AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) in reading, math and science. This assessment is given at grades 3-8 & 11.

Dakota Step – A: Assessment for student's whose IEP indicates alternate assessment. For accountability, this assessment is used to measure student proficiency and AYP in reading, math and science based on grade level alternate content standards. This assessment is given at grades 3-8 & 11.

Dakota Writing Assessment: Writing assessment given at grades 5, 8 & 10.

Alternate Writing: Alternate Writing Assessment for grades 5, 8 & 10.

DACS: The Dakota Assessment of Content Standards (DACS), measures the performance of students compared to the S.D. Content Standards.

NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subjects.

Who needs to participate?

According to the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 2004 and Title I legislation for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), all students with disabilities are required to be included in state and district-wide accountability.

What are accommodations?

Accommodations help "level the playing field." They do not alter or lower the standard or expectations of the test. Accommodations are a change in the test's preparation, student response, location, time/scheduling, expectations, and/or other attributes.

Non-standard accommodations fundamentally lower the standard or expectations of the test causing it to be invalid. For example: Reading the paragraphs in the reading comprehension test. Non-standard accommodations are not allowed on the Dakota STEP.

Who decides how a student with disabilities is involved in these assessments?

The IEP team decides whether a student needs to access grade level content primarily through general content standards with or without accommodations or whether the student needs to work in the alternate content standards. If the student is working in the general content standards they should participate in the general statewide assessment. Students working primarily in the South Dakota Extended Content and Alternate Academic Achievement Descriptors for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities and who meet the significant cognitive disability criteria should take the alternate assessment. IEP teams can use the "Flowchart for Assessment Determination" as a tool to assist with this decision.

What are the assessment options on the IEP?

1. Student will be taking the assessment without accommodations.
2. Student will be taking the assessment with accommodations identified by the IEP team.
3. Student will be taking the alternate assessment.
4. Student not required to take district or statewide assessments at this grade level.

Are there any implications for the assessment selections made?

For IDEA purposes, a student is considered to have participated in statewide testing by taking the assessment the IEP team determines most appropriate in the manner documented on the IEP.

For NCLB purposes, to be considered as having participated, a student must take an assessment that is considered valid. Only standard accommodations will be allowed for statewide testing purposes. That means that the student can not take the Dakota STEP with non-standard accommodations that lower the expectations of the test.

For students taking the Dakota STEP – A, the significant cognitive disability criteria must be met in order for the test to be considered. To be identified as having a significant cognitive disability, the student must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The student has an active IEP with annual goals and short term objectives/benchmarks which focus on South Dakota Extended Content and Alternate Academic Achievement Descriptors for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities; and,
2. the student's cognitive abilities are 2.0 standard deviations or more below the mean (inclusive of the standard error of measurement); and,
3. the student primarily requires direct and extensive instruction to acquire, maintain, generalize and transfer skills done in naturally occurring settings of the student's life. (e.g. school, community, home, vocational/career, and recreation and leisure).

Documentation of meeting the above three criteria used to determine eligibility for significant cognitive disability must be determined by the students IEP team, documented in the IEP and coded in the Student Information Management System (SIMS).
